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FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7745
INFO RUCNMER/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY 0001
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY 0038

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 000216

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STATE FOR WHA/BSC MDASCHBACH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2034
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PA](#)
SUBJECT: PARAGUAY INVESTS IN GLOBAL PEACEKEEPING COMPANY

REF: A. ASUNCION 00188
[1](#)B. 08 ASUNCION 00470

Classified By: A/DCM Joan Shaker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Paraguayan Military Forces Commander Admiral Cibar Benitez informed Ambassador by letter March 30 that he had authorized over USD 3.5 million in funds to support Paraguay's first United Nations (UN) Peace Keeping Operations Multi-Role Engineer (MRE) Company. The authorization follows Defense Minister Luis Bareiro Spaini's and Benitez' pledges to visiting SOUTHCOM Military Deputy Commander Lt. Gen. Glenn Spears to support continued U.S. training and development of Paraguay's Global Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) program (ref A). (NOTE: Paraguay's PKO program includes this MRE company, the first of three the military will develop; the military's Joint Peace Operations Training Center (CECOPAZ); and over 50 Paraguayan peacekeepers who currently serve in UN missions in Haiti, Africa, and Asia. END NOTE.) Benitez wrote to Ambassador that "we hope to continue counting on the valuable collaboration of your government in this endeavor to maintain international peace and security, in order to facilitate the execution of pending disbursements for the deployment of the company to the mission area."

[1](#)2. (C) COMMENT: Benitez' letter expresses the Paraguayan government's long-term commitment to its PKO program, which has received much of its financial and technical assistance from the Embassy's Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC). (NOTE: The ODC has committed USD 1.64 million in Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) funds to the program since 2007 to refurbish CECOPAZ facilities and stand up the first MRE company scheduled to deploy under Paraguayan flag in July (ref B). Although the UN offered the Paraguayan government in 2008 a peacekeeping assignment to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Paraguayan government declined, citing its preference to deploy to Haiti. END NOTE.) Benitez' letter also provides a clear affirmation that the Paraguayan government wants to continue close military cooperation with the United States. END COMMENT.

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